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OFFICE OF PETITIONS

In re Application of
Russell Dennis
Application No. 10/763,630
Filed: January 24, 2004
Attorney Docket No. RD9-03-001

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DECISION ON
PETITION

This is in response to the petition to revive under 37 CFR 1.137(a), or in the alternative under 37 CFR 1.137(b), filed November 13, 2006.

The petition under 37 CFR 1.137(a) is **DISMISSED**.

The petition under 37 CFR 1.137(b) is **GRANTED**.

The above-identified application became abandoned for failure to timely file a reply to the non-final Office action mailed April 4, 2006. This Office action set a shortened statutory period for reply of three (3) months. No extensions of time under 37 CFR 1.136(a) were obtained. No reply having been received, the above-identified application became abandoned on July 5, 2006. A Notice of Abandonment was mailed on October 25, 2006.

Petition Under 37 CFR 1.137(a):

A grantable petition under 37 CFR 1.137(a) must be accompanied by: (1) the reply required to the outstanding Office action or notice, unless previously filed; (2) the petition fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(1); (3) a showing to the satisfaction of the Commissioner that the entire delay in filing the required reply from the due date for the reply until the filing of a grantable petition pursuant to this paragraph was unavoidable; and (4) any terminal disclaimer (and fee as set forth in 37 CFR 1.20(d)) required pursuant to 37 CFR 1.137(d). The instant petition lacks item (3).

Decisions on reviving abandoned applications on the basis of "unavoidable" delay have adopted the reasonably prudent person standard in determining if the delay was unavoidable: "The word 'unavoidable' ... is applicable to ordinary human affairs, and requires no more or greater care or diligence than is generally used and observed by prudent and careful men in relation to their most important business."¹

Moreover, delay resulting from the lack of knowledge or improper application of the patent statutes, rules of practice or the Manual of Patent Examining Procedure, however, does not constitute "unavoidable" delay.²

Petitioner explains that during the time he was in the hospital for hip replacement surgery and during his recover, he had his wife process his incoming mail from the Patent Office. However, his wife misplaced the Office action in the wrong filed folder. While this error is one that was clearly "unintentional", it could have been avoided with the reasonable exercise of due care. Accordingly, the entire period of delay in the above-identified application can not be characterized as "unavoidable".

The petition fee required for a petition to revive is required for the filing, not merely the grant, of the petition.³

¹ In re Mattulath, 38 App. D.C. 497, 514-15 (1912) (quoting Ex parte Pratt, 1887 Dec. Comm'r Pat. 31, 32-33 (1887)); see also Winkler v. Ladd, 221 F. Supp. 550, 552, 138 U.S.P.Q. 666, 167-68 (D.D.C. 1963), aff'd, 143 U.S.P.Q. 172 (D.C. Cir. 1963); Ex parte Henrich, 1913 Dec. Comm'r Pat. 139, 141 (1913).

² See Haines, 673 F. Supp. at 317, 5 U.S.P.Q. 2d at 1132; Vincent v. Mossinghoff, 230 U.S.P.Q. 621, 624 (D.D.C. 1985); Smith v. Diamond, 209 U.S.P.Q. 1091 (D.D.C. 1981); Potter v. Dann, 201 U.S.P.Q. 574 (D.D.C. 1978); Ex parte Murray, 1891 Dec. Comm'r Pat. 130, 131 (1891).

³ See MPEP 711.03(c) (II) (B).

Accordingly, the \$250 petition fee has been charged to Deposit Account No. 12-1120, as authorized.

Petition Under 37 CFR 1.137(b):

A grantable petition under 37 CFR 1.137(b) must be accompanied by: (1) the required reply, unless previously filed; (2) the petition fee as set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(m); (3) a statement that the entire delay in filing the required reply from the due date for the reply until the filing of a grantable petition pursuant to 37 CFR 1.137(b) was unintentional; and (4) any terminal disclaimer (and fee as set forth in 37 CFR 1.20(d)) required by 37 CFR 1.137(d).

With the instant petition, petitioner paid the petition fee, submitted the required reply in the form of an Amendment, and made the proper statement of unintentional delay.

The \$750 petition fee has been charged to Deposit Account No. 12-1120, as authorized.

The file does not indicate a change of address has been submitted, although the address given on the petition differs from the address of record. If appropriate, a change of address should be filed in accordance with MPEP 601.03. A courtesy copy of this decision is being mailed to the address given on the petition; however, the Office will mail all future correspondence solely to the address of record.

The application file is being forwarded to the Group Art Unit 3679 for consideration of the Amendment, filed November 13, 2006.

Telephone inquiries related to this decision should be directed to the undersigned at 571-272-3207.



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